



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDER LIGHT ATTACK WING ONE  
NAVAL AIR STATION  
CECIL FIELD, FLORIDA 32215-0122

5750  
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10 JUL 1991

From: Commander, Light Attack Wing 1  
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy Yard,  
Washington D. C. 20374-0571

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) Command History for Commander, Light Attack Wing ONE - 1990  
(2) Biography of Captain John W. Curtin, USN  
(3) Photograph of Captain John W. Curtin, USN  
(4) Staff Directory  
(5) Organizational Chart

1. As required by reference (a), enclosures (1) through (5) are submitted.

(b) (6)

By direction

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COMMAND HISTORY FOR COMMANDER, LIGHT ATTACK WING ONE - 1990

I. COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

A. MISSION. Commander, Light Attack Wing ONE (CLAW-1) is a "Type Wing Commander", providing U.S. Atlantic Fleet Commanders with Light Attack Squadrons (flying A-7E Corsair II aircraft) and Strike-Fighter Squadrons (flying F/A-18 Hornet aircraft). CLAW-1 exercises administrative and operational control over two Fleet Replacement Squadrons (VFA-106 and VAQ-33), one Adversary Squadron (VF-45), one Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron (VAQ-33), ten F/A-18 squadrons and four A-7E squadrons. CLAW-1 is responsible for the shorebased operations, administrative, training, readiness and material condition inspections of the WING consisting of over 475 officers, 3900 sailors and 237 aircraft. The training and support provided by CLAW-1 ensures maximum combat readiness of the four fleet A-7E squadrons and the ten fleet F/A-18 squadrons during shore-based operations, while they are under the direct operational and administrative control of their respective Carrier Air Wing Commanders. CLAW-1 assumed operational control of two of the A-7 squadrons in OCT 90 during their transition to the F/A-18.

B. ORGANIZATION

(1) CLAW-1 is a major type wing and reports directly to Commander, Strike-Fighter Wings, Atlantic, who is the Functional Wing Commander reporting directly to Commander, Naval Air Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet. The following units come under the cognizance of CLAW-1:

- VFA 106 "Gladiators" -- East Coast's F/A-18 Fleet Replacement Squadron.

- VF-45 "Blackbirds" -- VFA/VA adversary squadron based at NAS Key West, Florida. One of three Navy Adversary squadrons providing Dissimilar Air Combat Maneuvering (DACM) training for East Coast TACAIR crews. In June 1990 the squadron established a permanent adversary detachment at NAS Cecil Field consisting of 25 personnel and up to four A-4 aircraft. Pilots are from the various staffs on board Cecil Field and have completed the VF-45 adversary syllabus.

- VAQ-33 "Firebirds" -- Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron based at NAS Key West, Florida. Conducts operational and training electronic warfare missions in support of fleet operations for second and third fleet air and surface units. Additional employment includes A-3 FRS/FRAMP readiness and training responsibilities for flight crews and maintenance personnel, including carrier qualifications. Acts as model manager for A-3 and EA-6A aircraft.

- Ten fleet F/A-18 squadrons: VFA-15 and VFA-87 (CVW-8); VFA-81 and VFA-83 (CVW-17); VFA-82 and VFA-86 (CVW-1); VFA-131 and VFA-136 (CVW-7); VFA-132 and VFA-137 (CVW-13 until CVW-13 disestablished and USS Coral Sea decommissioned)

- Four fleet A-7E squadrons: VA-46 and VA-72 (CVW-3); VA-37 and VA-105 (CVW-6). VA-37 and VA-105 redesignated VFA-37 and VFA-105 and came under operational and administrative control of CLAW-1 in the Fall of 1990. At the same time, VFA-132 and VFA-137 came under the operational and administrative control of CVW-6.

(2) The Wing was commanded by CAPT Dean M. Hendrickson until April, then CAPT John W. Curtin. A biography and photograph of CAPT Curtin, as well as a staff directory, are included.

(3) CLAW-1 is permanently headquartered at NAS Cecil Field in Jacksonville, Florida, where it has been since its commissioning in 1970.

(4) The tailcode of aircraft assigned to CLAW-1 is AD (Alpha Delta).

c. Miscellaneous:

(1) VFA-106 experienced its first Class "A" mishap in February (Mid-Air) and another in June (CAT I flew into the water during CO).

(2) Three A-7 squadrons - over six years Class "A" mishap free.

(3) Four F/A-18 squadrons - over five years Class "A" mishap free.

(4) Light Attack/Strike-Fighter hours: 90,638

(5) Highest Full Mission Capable (FMC) rates in TACAIR Navy.

(6) Highest retention rates for any type wing.

(7) Initially deployed two squadrons to the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean prior to "Operation Desert Shield", deployed 8 additional squadrons to the Red Sea and Persian Gulf in support of "Operation Desert Shield".

(8) VA-37 and VA-105 initiated transition into the F/A-18.

(9) CNO Safety "S" Award recipients for CY89.

- (a) Light Attack: VA-37
- (b) Strike-Fighter: VFA-106
- (c) Service Squadron: VAQ-33

(10) Two Strike-Fighter squadrons Class "A" mishap free since date of commission: VFA-132 and VFA-137.



## II. CHRONOLOGY 1990

JANUARY: VFA-15 and VFA-87 aboard USS Abraham Lincoln for Shakedown Cruise.

VFA-131 and VFA-136 conducted Battle Group Phase aboard the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower.

VFA-132 and VFA-137 deployed to Roosevelt Roads.

VF-45, VFA-136 and VFA-131 Aircraft Material Condition Inspection (AMCI).

FEBRUARY: VFA-81 and VFA-83 aboard USS Saratoga for REFTRA.

VFA-82 deployed aboard USS Constellation for "Around-the-Horn" transit to the East Coast in preparation for "SLEP" in Philadelphia.

VFA-87 surpassed 6 years Class "A" mishap free.

VFA-82 surpassed 3 years Class "A" mishap free.

MARCH: Conducted ADMAT Inspection on VA-72 and VFA-86.

VA-46 and VA-72 deployed to Fallon, NV.

VFA-81 and VFA-83 conducted Advanced Phase aboard the USS Saratoga.

VFA-15 hosted by VF-45 for SFARP at NAS Key West.

VFA-131 and VFA-136 deployed aboard USS Dwight D. Eisenhower.

VF-45 surpassed 3 years Class "A" mishap free.

VA-72 and VA-46 Pre-deployment AMCI.

APRIL: VA-46 and VA-72 conducted FLEETEX aboard USS John F. Kennedy.

VA-37 and VA-105 returned from deployment.

VFA-15 and VFA-87 deployed to Fallon, NV.

VFA-132 and VFA-137 deployed to Nellis AFB for Red Flag.

VA-37 Post-deployment AMCI.

MAY: Conducted ADMAT Inspection on VA-37, VA-105, and VFA-81.

VFA-15 and VFA-87 conducted REFTRA & Tiger Cruise onboard USS Theodore Roosevelt.

VFA-82 and VFA-86 conducted AARP at NAS Cecil Field.

VFA-137 hosted by VF-45 for SFARP at NAS Key West.

VA-105 Post-deployment AMCI.

Conducted semiannual AMCI of VFA-106 and VFA-132.

JUNE:

Conducted ADMAT Inspection on VFA-82.

VA-37 and VA-105 deployed to Roosevelt Roads.

VFA-81 and VFA-83 conducted FLEETEX onboard the USS Saratoga.

VFA-15 and VFA-87 deployed onboard USS Theodore Roosevelt for Advanced Phase.

VFA-132 was hosted by VF-45 for SFARP at NAS Key West.

VFA-132 surpassed 6 years Class "A" mishap free.

VFA-83 surpassed 5 years Class "A" mishap free.

Conducted semiannual AMCI of VFA-15 and VFA-87.

JULY:

VFA-86 hosted by VF-45 for SFARP at NAS Key West.

VFA-82 and VFA-86 deployed onboard USS America for ISE.

VFA-132 deployed to Roosevelt Roads.

VFA-81 and VFA-83 Pre-deployment AMCI.

VFA-137, VFA-106, and VA-37 CNAL Performance Improvement Team (PIT) visit.

AUGUST:

Conducted ADMAT Inspection on VAQ-33.

VA-37 and VA-105 begin transition from the A-7 to the F/A-18.

VFA-81 and VFA-83 deployed on time aboard USS Saratoga to the Red Sea in support of "Operation Desert Shield". Conducted transit of Atlantic and Mediterranean in record time.

VA-46 and VA-72 emergency sortied with 4 days notice on USS John F. Kennedy and deployed to the Red Sea in direct support of "Operation Desert Shield".

VFA-82 was hosted by VF-45 for SFARP at NAS Key West.

VFA-86 deployed to Nellis AFB for Red Flag.

VFA-132 and VFA-137 deployed aboard USS Abraham Lincoln for ISE.

VA-37 surpassed 6 years Class "A" mishap free.

VFA-86 surpassed 6 years Class "A" mishap free.

Conducted semiannual AMCI of VFA-82 and VAQ-33.

SEPTEMBER: VA-105 deployed to Nellis AFB for Red Flag.

VFA-131 and VFA-136 returned from deployment on USS Dwight D. Eisenhower.

VFA-82 and VFA-86 deployed to VFA-106 DET Fallon, NV.

VFA-132 and VFA-137 deployed onboard USS America for ISE.

Several CLAW-1 staff civilian personnel recalled to active duty in support of "Operation Desert Shield".

VA-46 surpassed 8 years Class "A" mishap free.

VFA-131 and VFA-136 Post-deployment AMCI.

OCTOBER: VFA-106 started Night Vision Goggle Training.

VA-37 deployed to EL Centro.

VFA-82 and VFA-86 deployed onboard the USS America for REFTRA/Advanced Phase.

VFA-132 deployed to Fallon, NV.

VFA-81 surpassed 1 year Class "A" mishap free.

Lot XIII aircraft delivery started at NZC.

Conducted annual inspection on VF-45 and OMD at NAS Key West.

NOVEMBER: Conducted ADMAT Inspection on VFA-15, VFA-106, and VFA-131.

VFA-137 deployed to Roosevelt Roads.

VFA-15 and VFA-87 deployed onboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt for FLEETEX.



VAQ-33 surpassed 3 years Class "A" mishap free.

VA-37 and VA-105 redesignated as VFA.

VFA-15 Pre-deployment AMCI.

DECEMBER: Conducted ADMAT Inspection on VFA-87.

First Night Vision Goggle syllabus hops flown by VFA-136 pilots with VFA-106 instructor pilots.

VFA-15 and VFA-87 deployed on time aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt to the Persian Gulf in support of "Operation Desert Shield".

VFA-82 and VFA-86 deployed early onboard USS America to the Red Sea in direct support of "Operation Desert Shield".

VFA-137 surpassed 5 years Class "A" mishap free.

VA-105 surpassed 7 years Class "A" mishap free.

VFA-131 surpassed 3 years Class "A" mishap free.

VA-72 surpassed 6 years Class "A" mishap free.

VFA-15 surpassed 6 years Class "A" mishap free.

VFA-86, VFA-87 and VFA-82 Pre-deployment AMCI.

III. NARRATIVE: Light Attack Wing ONE continued to lead tactical aviation communities in every measurable area. Innovations in tactics, maintenance practices and personnel programs ensured each Light Attack/Strike-Fighter Squadron remained at the tip of strike warfare's sword.

As the crisis in the Middle East resulting from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait ignited in August 1990, VFA-131 and VFA-136 were deployed with CVW-7 on USS Dwight D. Eisenhower in the Mediterranean. Ike immediately transited the Suez Canal, entered the Red Sea and along with other coalition Naval Forces, prepared to defend Saudi Arabia from also being invaded. Defense Secretary Cheney immediately negotiated for forward deployment of US Air and Ground Forces onto Saudi soil while USS Saratoga departed with CVW-17 (VFA-81 and VFA-83) for a record transit of the Atlantic and Mediterranean. USS Kennedy and CVW-3 (VA-46 and VA-72 - the last of the CORSAIR squadrons) reversed their post deployment standdown posture and emergency sortied with only 4 days notice - fully combat ready. With U.S. Air Force tanker support in place in Saudi Arabia, U.S. Navy Carrier Aircraft were now well within reach of invading Iraqi armies. In December 1990, USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVW-8 - VFA-

15/87) and USS America (CVW-1 - VFA-82/86) deployed in support of Desert Shield until the air war (Desert Storm) commenced January 16, 1991.

CLAW-1 continued to ready replacement pilots and aircraft from among the remaining fleet A-7 and F/A-18 squadrons at Cecil Field. CVW-6 and USS Forrestal (VFA-132/137) commenced work-ups in preparation for immediate deployment but did not participate in Desert Shield/Storm.



**CAPTAIN JOHN W. CURTIN, SR.,**  
**UNITED STATES NAVY**  
COMMANDER, LIGHT ATTACK WING ONE  
NAVAL AIR STATION, CECIL FIELD, FL

Captain Curtin was born in (b) (6), and raised in (b) (6). He entered the Navy as an Airman Recruit in 1963 and upon completion of his initial tour he attended the University of Minnesota and Winona State University, graduating with a BA in Business Administration. Upon graduation in June, 1968, Capt Curtin reported for duty as an Aviation Officer Candidate and was commissioned in October 1968 and immediately entered flight training, earning his 'Wings of Gold' in April, 1970.

His duty assignments include, Attack Squadron 174 for Replacement Pilot Training; Attack Squadron 66 as a Fleet Light Attack Pilot aboard the USS INDEPENDENCE, making two deployments to the Mediterranean Sea; Naval Recruiter duty at District Headquarters, Milwaukee, Wisconsin where he earned the Recruiting Gold Wreath; the USS SARATOGA as the Flight Deck Officer and as the Aircraft Handling Officer, making two more deployments to the Mediterranean Sea; Attack Squadron 45, NAS Cecil Field, serving as both Maintenance and Operations Officers, and was instrumental in moving and setting up the Fleet Adversary Squadron in Key West, Florida; Attack Squadron 174 for Replacement Pilot Training prior to reporting to Attack Squadron 72 for his Department Head Tour, serving as the Operations Officer and Maintenance Officer while deployed aboard the USS AMERICA to the North Atlantic, Mediterranean Sea, and Indian Ocean; Attack Squadron 174 as the Executive Officer; Attack Squadron 15 as the Executive Officer, deploying for 6 months to the Far East with Marine Aircraft Group 12, forward deploying for 6 months to Iwakuni, Japan, and upon completion of deployment, transitioning to the FA-18 Hornet, with Capt Curtin assuming command of Strike-Fighter Squadron 15 in January, 1987. Under his command, the squadron successfully completed transition and initial workups prior to deployment aboard the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT and was awarded the COMNAVAIRLANT Battle "E" for the 1988 competitive year. Capt Curtin has served 18 months as the Operations Officer aboard the USS SARATOGA, amassing over 4,000 flight hours in Light Attack Single-Seat Aircraft and accumulated over 750 carrier landings. As of March 08, 1990, Capt Curtin has commanded, Light Attack Wing ONE at NAS Cecil Field, FL.

His personal awards include 2 Meritorious Service Medals, 4 Navy Commendation Medals and numerous other personal and unit awards.

He is married to the former (b) (6) and they reside with their 2 sons (b) (6), and (b) (6).

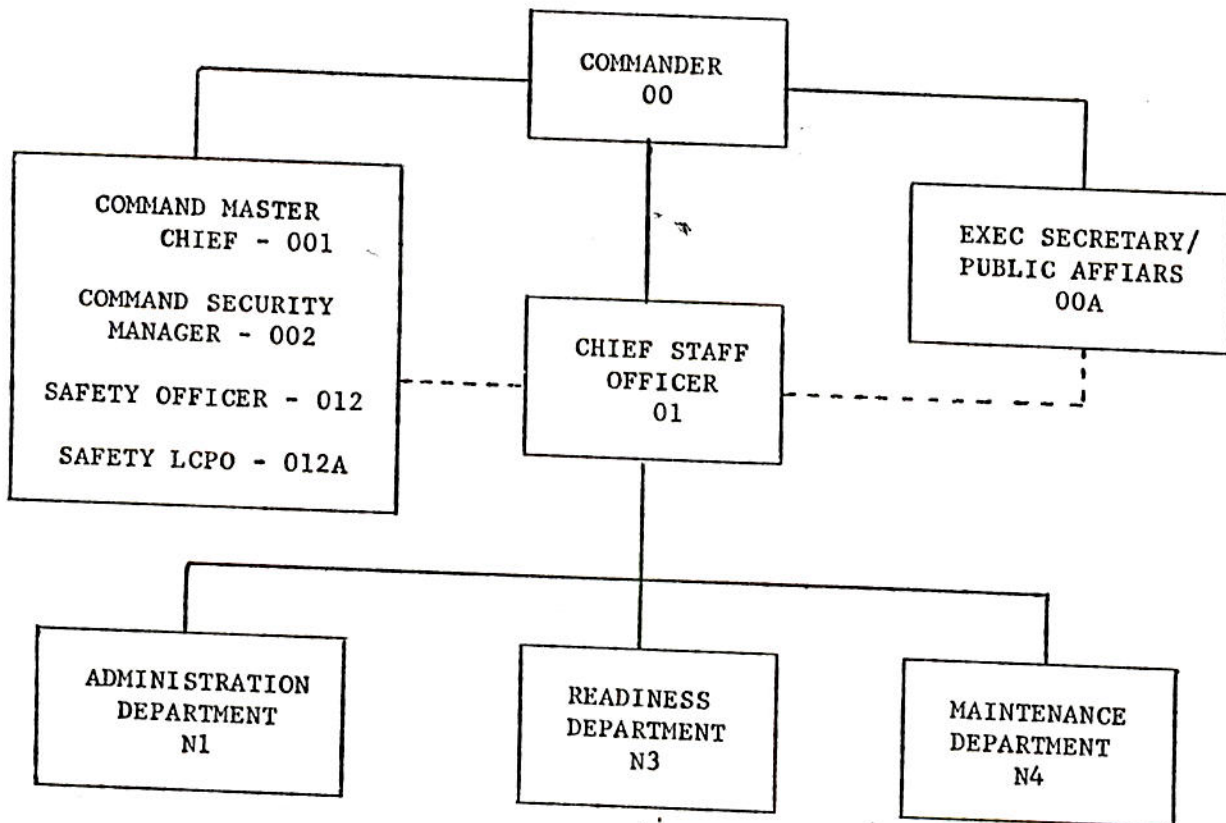
ENCL (2)





ENCLOSURE (3)

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART  
LIGHT ATTACK WING ONE



ENCL (5)